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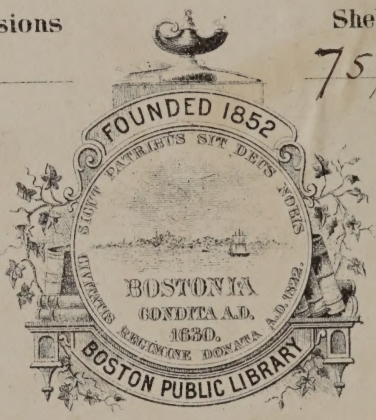

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A

PLEA FOR THE BIBLE

IN THE

STATE REFORM SCHOOL

WESTBORO', MASS.

A FAREWELL DISCOURSE

BY

REV. N. SCOTT, A.M.

DELIVERED APRIL 27, 1862.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR.
1862.

W. N. Scott, Del. & Sc.

STATE REFORM SCHOOL,
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DISCOURSE.

The duties of this hour have not been coveted. I enter upon them with sad and painful reluctance; *sad*, because of being suddenly called to say the last words to this youthful band, whom I have learned to love with love unfeigned; and *painful*, because I must not leave them without disclosing some serious apprehensions as to the moral and spiritual evils, that, to the mind of the retiring Chaplain, seem to be somewhat eminent. The occasion appeals only to the kindlier and benevolent feelings of the heart.

The train of remark to be submitted will be indicated and justified by the following passages of Scripture:—

"The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death."—Prov. 14: 27.

"For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in, not sparing the flock."—Acts 20: 29.

The first member of this text points to the fear of God, as the perfection of a true life, and the great safeguard of man's moral and spiritual interests.

The second member, chosen, not for its seeming harshness, but simply for its emphasis of meaning, teaches us the danger of withdrawing strictly religious instruction from any community. Collectively, these texts point us to the value of, and necessity for, putting the *Scriptures* in the foreground of

all formative and re-formative culture. A just and intelligent fear of the Lord can never exist only where there is an acquaintance with, and reverence for, the Scriptures. We have not, therefore, done the best thing for the youths of our cities and schools, until we have brought them under an earnest culture in this regard. This principle was long since established, when God said to the Israelites: "These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." A failure in this culture, has ever been, and doubtless ever will be, fatal to the moral safety of the young.

For this culture of both young and old, was the Christian ministry instituted in the premises, and for this end did the legal fathers and guardians of this institution wisely, and in the outset, provide for its exercise among these dear youths in whose interests I am to speak to-day.

The special necessity of this ministry, and the best methods of its exercise among these youths, are to claim our attention on this occasion.

Three questions, already raised in official circles, will serve to give shape and color to this Discourse.

I. Shall this ministry or chaplaincy be in the hands of a single non-resident who shall conduct the exercises of the Sabbath, and perhaps pay his youthful charge an occasional visit at other times?

A single non-resident Chaplain would have these advantages: His ministrations would be something like a pastor's weekly visit to his own sanctuary, and among his own people. He would speak as the approved and authorized minister of this congregation; this would be his parish and his church. During the week, he would be absent, seeing none of the faults of his parishioners, and they seeing none of his.

His appearance in the presence of his youthful charge,

from Sabbath to Sabbath, would have something of the pleasure and influence of a friendly visit; while at the same time he would be fully cognizant of the whole course of public religious instruction here given.

The *disadvantages* of such a ministry would, for the most part, become the advantages of a resident Chaplain, and will be reserved for consideration under that division.

Under certain contingencies, my own mind would not seriously object to such a non-resident ministry among these youths. It would be analogous to the mode of religious instruction common in all our beautiful New England parishes, and which has worked so happily across the interval of more than two hundred years, in making New England society what it is.

The difference between the religious duties and exigencies of three hundred persons here, and three hundred persons of like age and attainments elsewhere, would not seem to be radical, whatever minor differences might obtain. The nature, necessities, duties and susceptibilities of the heart here, are exactly what they are everywhere. Here is a world in miniature; a concentrated world. Here is quickness of perception, readiness of wit, retentiveness of memory, fullness of apprehension, and coolness of calculation. Here is tenderness of sensibility, readiness of impressibility and the loveliness of amiability. Here are all the various shades of hope, aspiration, fears and passions known to the human heart. Here, too, are all the faults, weaknesses and sins common to men. Over this community, as over all others, the laws of God, and the promises of the Gospel, are in full force. For these youths, and for this household, Christ died, as he died for all men. Hence, the same means, precisely, which God has ordained as proper and necessary for the correct formation and re-formation of character the world over, become the proper and necessary means of accomplishing the great end for which this and all similar institutions exist.

Hence, the same kind of ministry is proper and needful in

our institutions of reform, as is proper and needful everywhere. Precisely here we discover the rock on which these institutions are imminently liable to break. They will not fail and go down again for the want of patronage; they will not fail for the want of funds to sustain them; they will not fail for the want of talents and energy to manage them; for talents and energy adequate to this end may be found within the limits of every county, and well nigh in every township.

If these institutions of reform fail of accomplishing the great and beneficent end for which they exist, it will be through some defect in the methods of moral and religious culture. If the lighter kinds of address, suited only to the lyceum and the theatre, causing a *forgetfulness* of the Sabbath rather than its remembrance, setting aside and over-riding the Scriptures and changing the hour of worship into an hour of mirthfulness, — if this kind of address is to be substituted, in these institutions, for the serious and earnest ministrations of religious truths, then good and intelligent people who look back to the first and too widely existing causes that render the existence of these institutions necessary, will not fail to be sadly convinced that the highest and best good of these youths is by no means reached. It will not be forgotten that our institutions of reform are filled almost entirely with those whose consciences or moral sense have not been developed by a careful, religious education at home. That defect of childhood education, and that defect alone, renders the existence of these institutions necessary. Hence it will be seen at a glance that the grand element of success in these institutions is the remedy for that defect of early childhood training. It is clear as the noon-day sun, that that remedy can be had only by and in doing for these youths what ought to have been done, yet failed of being done for them while under the parental roof.

Now God has ordained the serious, faithful and systematic ministrations of divine truth, as the only effectual educator of the conscience, and as the only means of inducing that "*fear*

of the Lord which is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death." Hence the necessity of bringing these youths under the direct influence of the Christian ministry. Such a ministry is the key-stone in the great arch of religious instruction and influences. But, that the incumbent of this office should, in all cases, be a *resident* officer, my own mind is not prepared to affirm.

Human nature is such; the necessities of the highest secular office in these institutions, are such; the eddies, currents and counter-currents of influence, are such, as to justify the inquiry, whether a Chaplain, under certain contingencies, may not accomplish his work very well, between the meridians of Saturday and Monday, and yet reside elsewhere?

On this point, after eighteen months of quiet and careful observation and study, my own judgment is this: —

Place at the head of this and similar institutions some faithful Abraham, who can believe God, bow to the authority of his word, respect his institutions and experimentally understand the transforming influence of the Christian religion upon the young heart — one who can readily distinguish between a rightly educated conscience, and a mere educated regard to self-interest — one who shall surround himself with a corps of associates, who can likewise pity these youths in their misfortunes and moral infirmities, who can likewise thoroughly respect those institutions and influences that God gave and sanctioned as the only proper basis of reform, the world over, — I say, with such a head, aided by such associates, I would not deem it necessary to spend much time in arguing for a resident ministry in these institutions of reform. But I speak under advisement; from the stand-point of knowledge, as also from the fulness of my heart, when I say, that, without such a head, and without such a corps of assistants, the highest and best good of these dear youths can by no means be reached with a non-resident ministry.

My objections to such a chaplaincy in this institution will appear in a later part of this Discourse. For, necessity is

laid upon me to-day, to speak, not only as a retiring Chaplain, but from the office of the Christian ministry, that stands so intimately and solemnly related, in its responsibilities, to God and to man. I must speak with fidelity to those ordination vows, that solemnly bound me ever to be true to the Scriptures, even to torture and the stake, exposing and opposing the poisoning influences of religious error and infidelity, wherever my lot may be cast.

Yea, in these my last sayings from this desk where I have so long loved to stand, I must act with fidelity to that consecrating prayer, which gave me to the ministry of the Lord Jesus while yet an infant on my mother's knee.

I shall, therefore, hope to be pardoned, if, in the progress of this Discourse, I make some plain allusions to the controling religious influences under which this institution unfortunately seems to have fallen. Let it be distinctly understood, however, that voluntarily expressed opinions and undeniable practical influences, *not persons*, are in the controversy, if controversy there be. As to the mere secular educational affairs, probably two independent minds would seldom be found more completely in harmony than those which, for the last fifteen months, have been respectively at the head of the secular and religious departments of this institution.

But in reference to the *ministry* proper to be exercised among this class of youths, and in reference to the religious influences proper to be exerted upon them, there is doubtless a difference of opinion; perhaps a radical difference. One thing, however, is certain: a non-resident Chaplaincy will never harmonize this difference.

II. A second question raised in official circles is this: Cannot the ministry for these youths be profitably exercised by miscellaneous supplies?

To many minds, perhaps, this question opens a most beautiful theory of religious culture. And I confess, were I to be parishioner and listener, ignorant of the workings and influ-

ence of constant change of religious teachers in other connections and places, able to command always the services of the "right man," my object being gratification, instead of permanent religious advancement, why, then, the greater variety of speakers the better.

But, really, something within me whispers, "Is this, on the whole, the best thing for these youths in their present circumstances"? How far is this theory of change acted on in other departments of mental and moral culture? What is the answer from all our colleges, seminaries, high schools, normal schools and reform schools? Is constant change of superintendents, guardians and teachers, the rule in these institutions? Then why make the fact and science of religious culture an exception? The analogy between the science and philosophy of this department of educational influence and that of other departments of education, I apprehend, is much closer than is generally supposed. True religion is based on a varied and advancing knowledge of God. But where there is an ever-recurring change of religious teachers, advancement in religious knowledge and principles is much like the advancement of a vehicle, whose wheels not only turn on their axles, but slip also on the tire. Each speaker comes with a theme of his own, ignorant of what has transpired on previous Sabbaths, ignorant it may be of the peculiarities and special difficulties of the minds which he is to address, and only able to draw his bow at a venture, at best. An entire miscellaneous culture is the inevitable consequence, to say nothing of the necessary abatements to be charged upon the idiosyncracies and various moral shadings of different speakers. In the nature of things, there can be no system about it, no symmetry of instruction and influence, and none of that peculiar moral force of authority, always inhering in a teacher regularly approved and authorized by a competent appointing power. With such miscellaneous religious instruction, there can be only a most superficial knowledge of those things which most deeply concern all men to know, and for the want of which

knowledge and influence are all these youths found to-day in our institutions of reform.

The Christian public have, everywhere and long since, answered the question of expediency as to miscellaneous religious teachers.

It is, I believe, a universally admitted fact, that even a short period of miscellaneous supplies is sure to become irksome and injurious to any intelligent congregation. Even that far-famed and self-reliant congregation of Music Hall, is to-day sending out runners and messages all over the land, to call in the right man to deliver them from the uncertainty and irksomeness of miscellaneous, so called, religious teachers.

Well, why make the youths in our reform schools an exception? Do you say they are young and uneducated, and therefore need variety to keep up their interest and attention? Eighteen months of experience in this institution have not so taught me. The uniform and unbiased testimony of strangers present on the Sabbath, as that testimony has incidentally come to my own ears, runs something like this: "What excellent attention your boys pay to the preaching. Why, some of them look as though they would swallow every word said to them."

This testimony, increasingly applicable during the last six months of his connection here, has been especially gratifying to the retiring Chaplain, because it has served to confirm him in his convictions that no necessity exists in our reform schools for departing from the uniform evangelical idea of the proprieties of the sacred desk.

The truth is, the youths congregated in our reform schools are essentially like all other congregations of like age and culture. The exigencies of their case demand the same instrumentalities and forces, in the formation of character, as the exigencies of all youths everywhere demand. True, they are young, and need simplicity; but in this institution they are older and far more intelligent, than is sometimes supposed. Like all the rest of us, in listening to public

discourse, they need, sometimes, anecdote, supposition, objective illustration, &c., to aid them in seizing upon a point or principle in discourse; but I have yet to learn, that variety of speakers, is necessary, in order to arrest their attention, or enlist their interest.

A most potent objection to this pleasing dream of miscellaneous supplies, may also, sometimes, be found in the human nature of the speakers themselves. Poor human nature is sometimes weak, after all. In, perhaps, four-fifths of the strangers who visit the reform school and address the boys on the Sabbath, there seems to be an irresistible obliviousness of the law of the Sabbath, and of the proprieties of the sanctuary. They seem to feel that they have not benefited the inmates till they have interested them; that they have not interested them till they have pleased them; and that they have not pleased them till they have ripened that pleasure into an audible laughter. If they are successful in this, perhaps unconscious programme, they seem to expect to bear away with them the not unlikely encomiums of "interesting," "smart," "acceptable," "adapted," &c., &c., even though, in a forty minutes address, the merest allusion may have been made to God, Christ, the Scriptures, or any strictly religious duty. The composition of the *household*, in these schools of reform, doubtless has much to do with the character of the public address to be expected from men whose desires to please, and aspirations to popularity, may have reached any special development. Official, and semi-official influence, even though unconscious and unintended, has over many minds an irresistible power. Only two weeks ago, it was our privilege to listen to an address by a brother widely known to our evangelical Sabbath Schools, and doubtless widely and deservedly respected as an evangelical Christian. But why that whisper, immediately previous to the address, in the ear of your Chaplain, saying, "I shall be a little more familiar here to-day than in other Sabbath Schools?" and why, again, that apology at the close, in these words, "I meant to have had more of Christ in my remarks,

but I never felt so strangely, I did not say what I intended?" Those conversant with the circumstances of that part of the household, which by official rank claim to *be the* household, and then just in the flush of a supposed anti-evangelical triumph will not fail to comprehend the dilemma into which that brother had unfortunately fallen. But the Christian public will not fully comprehend the *extent* of this official influence, till it learns that the spell follows the brother in question, even all the way from here to the Boston Daily Journal, inserting there, to use the mildest terms, what did not happen to be true.

The tendency of public speakers here, as in other similar institutions, and against which the retiring Chaplain has conscientiously stood, is an apparent forgetfulness of the law of the Sabbath, the proprieties of the sanctuary, and the religious character of public worship. But why forget the law of the Sabbath and the evangelical idea of the proprieties of public worship, in the presence of these youths, whom we are educating for the future? Why forget and pass by the direct claims of God and Jesus Christ, in the services of the sanctuary here, more than elsewhere? I confess to an obtuseness that cannot discover an adequate reason.

We are educating these dear youths for an entrance into other relations; we are representing to them *our* ideas, and educating them in *their* ideas of Christian life and duty. We are doing this for their highest good. But when they shall be led, hereafter, to the house of God in other places, and shall be invited to sit down, as I hope many of them will, under the forms of evangelical worship, if they shall then discover that the forms of worship here have been comparatively light and trifling, turned into what is sometimes denominated a good time generally, and there find that the preaching of the gospel is made of really serious and practical importance, will they not justly turn to the legal fathers and guardians of this institution and ask them a reason for the difference? Of course it will be said, "no such difference is

intended." But when the echo comes down from the fathers in solemn conclave, criticising the preaching of the last year as having been too serious for these youths; and when my own observation for eighteen months gives its unqualified testimony that, with one or two exceptions, the speakers from abroad who have been most *applauded* by those who now claim to be the household, have made the most direct appeals to our mirthfulness, it will be hard to convince an intelligent public that no difference exists between the desired forms of worship here and elsewhere. And it will be difficult to allay the fears of the Christian public that, with a miscellaneous ministry from abroad, and under the present composition of "the household," this difference will increase as time wears on.

Besides, this department filled by miscellaneous supplies, and under the claim now seriously and officially set up for the entrance here of religious teachers, including every known sect in the land, it would be strange indeed if these youths and this household should not be occasionally pained, as, three weeks since, we were nearly all pained by the public setting aside of the Scriptures as unnecessary for furnishing a text to the minister, and by such a flat contradiction of God's word, as afterward to call forth such a united expression of disapprobation from these dear boys of mine, as truly made the retiring Chaplain feel that his manner of preaching here, and his manner of life here, had not been altogether in vain. This raid upon the Scriptures, and upon their emphatic instructions, would have hardly been attempted in the presence of these youths, had not the controlling influences here been supposed, beforehand, to be very well understood.

The effects of such miscellaneous, and so to speak, irresponsible religious instructions on these young minds, will be seen at a glance. It must inevitably result in a sad confusion of ideas in the premises, and in painful sequences in the future. A person's religious sentiments will *out*, in spite of himself, whenever he attempts any very lengthy train of reli-

gious remarks. These boys, though they may not at all times be able to give a reason, or answer an argument, are, nevertheless, extremely quick to discover the different phases of religious instruction emanating from this desk. Even with the limited variety of speakers called in here, under the eye of your Chaplain, in connection with the variety of preparatory teaching for the Sabbath School, a voice already comes up from various quarters of this little camp, saying, in the most earnest tones, "One man tells us one thing, another another thing, and we do n't know what to believe. Who shall we believe?" Such language as this, from my youthful charge, has penetrated to the inner chambers, and made my heart to weep in secret places. The retiring Chaplain has been compelled, as never before, to comprehend and realize the inevitable final result that must come on many of these young minds, now so helplessly away from any parental guidance, and in these matters of the highest moment, so helplessly at the mercy of the legal fathers and guardians of this institution.

The result foreshadowed by this unconscious protest against a miscellaneous ministry from this desk, and coming as it does from those who cannot help themselves — the result so unmistakably foreshadowed by this protesting voice, is to be on many minds an inevitable alienation from, and perhaps disgust with, all religion and all religious teachers. Its sure and unmistakable forerunner will be a growing disrespect toward all things religious, in the various departments of this institution, and its influence will reach far down into the future of their existence. The sanctuary, under this system, will here cease to be that sacred place that it is elsewhere; morning and evening devotions, (pronounced in high position here to be "a nuisance" in our Grammar Schools) if morning and evening service there be, will soon be read and judged of as no more than an idle form; the evangelical idea of the holy Sabbath, already waning from these halls and these yards, already trampled upon by company strolls into the surrounding fields

and woods, will be lost to these young hearts, in spite of all the pleasing addresses, witty sayings and smart performances that can here possibly be had in requisition on a spare hour of the Sabbath. This institution, under the religious sentiments now in the ascendancy here, must inevitably become in practice a school for irreligion and infidelity, whatever social good it may accomplish for these youths.

Again, transient speakers will gain but a transient hold on these young hearts, even though they may say the very best things which, from past experience, it is not too much to say, will be far from being always true. During the week, other influences will be in the ascendancy, and by reason of official station will exert a continuous and immeasurably a more powerfully moulding influence than all the yearly round of miscellaneous Sabbath speakers that can be paraded up here from the four quarters of the globe. "Give me the ballads of a nation, and I care not who makes the laws." Give me the confidence, love and even semi-official control of this family of children, and allow me the daily ministrations and communings with them, I should hope not to be outdone in the instrumental formation of their characters by any transient influences that might be brought to bear upon them.

Now let us observe that a man's *religion* is the basis of his real character. Let us observe secondly, that the *religious* influence exerted on these boys will be the basis of any real modification of *character* that shall be wrought out in *them* by their connection here.

We are now prepared to consider what might occur in this institution, and, in the absence of a regular Evangelical Chaplain, occur almost unmodified. And as facts are sometimes taught by fiction, let us, for prudential reasons, *suppose* a case. Suppose that at Randall's Island, N. Y., where, last season, I saw some four hundred or five hundred boys, many of them looking as if they knew little of the kindlier sympathies of life; suppose that religious sentiments and influences should be introduced there something as follows: — Let the great

doctrines of evangelical religion be freely, openly and earnestly assailed among the employees, endeavoring to create an anti-religious atmosphere in almost every department in the institution; let a right be expressly claimed, not only to criticise the *translation* of the Scriptures, but the very language of acknowledged Scripture itself; let the boys be taught in the Sabbath School to reject the literal interpretation of the Old Testament, by being taught that there was no more an actual Jonah than that they are all Jonah's; no more an Elisha, as a party in the drama of the forty-two children torn by bears, than that all the prophets were Elisha's; no more forty-two children than that all the Jews were the forty-two children; no more bears than that all the bad passions of the Jews were bears tearing in pieces the owners thereof; let the boys be taught there at Randall's Island, that God is never angry with the wicked, that he never threatens the ungodly with his judgments, when the Bible is so full of these threatenings that wicked men do not at all love to read it; let there be expressed in influential quarters an emphatic and unqualified dislike to the phraseology of the Ten Commandments, in these words, "I don't like the Thou shalt and Thou shalt not," just as if the infinite and almighty God, in the administration of his government, must take a respectful position before his own creatures, and instead of saying "Thou shalt and Thou shalt not," in the exercise of a Sovereign's right, must say, as a mere friendly adviser, "Please, gentlemen, have no other gods before me, as I may have some little feeling about it, and above all, *your good* may be somewhat affected by it;" let it be further urged by those in the official care of those boys, that the almighty and adorable Jehovah, in the administration of his moral government, "will do no more with transgressors of his law than a loving mother would do in the case of her own erring son;" just as if the distance between man and the Creator of the universe was no greater than between mother and son who dwell in the same house and eat at the same table; let it be said with the utmost light-

ness, over a precious gift bundle of three hundred Testaments, "Here is your religion by the basket-full;" let the evangelical doctrine of the new birth be openly ridiculed, by saying of a weak minded, yet somewhat troublesome boy, "All he wants is a new heart, and he will do well enough;" let the boys at Randall's Island be taught publicly at the close of a serious funeral discourse for one of their own number, and in direct opposition to its spirit and letter, "not to fear to die, not to be afraid of death," omitting all reference to the evangelical idea of preparation; let the boys there be publicly taught in so many words "not to fear God, not to be afraid of God, never to fear God," and the speaker be afterwards commended by the incumbent of the highest secular office in the institution, as a speaker eminently adapted to address the young; let it be held and taught that God is never angry with the wicked, and that he never punishes, except in a natural way, by a natural law; and finally, along with all this painful disregard of God and perversion of his moral attributes, let there be a corresponding disregard of man, deliberately, openly and emphatically expressed by the first secular officer, in nearly, perhaps exactly, these words: "In the management of this institution, I do n't care for the good opinion of only about ten men in the State — all the rest, I care nothing about;" thereby practically placing himself and the institution on that boasted "higher plain," from which the great mass of good sense, intelligence and piety, in the *thousands*, is looked down upon with unconcealed disdain; I say, with such sentiments as these, in the ascendancy of power at Randall's Island, would it not be pertinent for an interested public to begin to inquire for the proposed basis of moral culture, on which the character of those boys is to be formed? and whether a miscellaneous ministry of an hour on the Sabbath would meet the exigencies of the case at all? even though that ministry might be entirely unexceptionable to the best of judgments. Precisely here also, after inquiring whether the sentiments quoted might not adhere to the very worst of men, without

making them better men, would it not be pertinent for an intelligent public to inquire whether the tastes and judgments, which had knowingly introduced these sentiments to the office that was to influence, and we might almost say, control all other offices, would not be disqualified for deciding on the character of the ministry proper to be exercised in the same institution? *Consistency* of taste and judgment would lead only to the appointment and approbation of a ministry in harmony with the controlling official influences. *Inconsistency* and *absurdity* would appoint a ministry, whose felt duty would be to set forth and build up, on an hour of the Sabbath, that which official influence and contact would have all the week to tear down and root out. Should it be said that this inconsistency was forestalled by the exaction of "a solemn pledge not to interfere with the ministry;" the universal verdict would be this: If an evangelical ministry is at all needful among the boys in the institution, then that which rendered such a pledge necessary from the highest secular office was fatal to the qualifications of the proposed incumbent. Can an opaque body, though it be no more than a bank of fog, stand between us and the sun, and not take off from its light and heat? No more, an intelligent public would say, can the first secular office in the institution at Randall's Island be filled with the sentiments quoted, and an evangelical ministry, and the formation of youthful character in the same institution, not be interfered with. The incident of the pledge would *increase* the inconsistency. The Christian public would be saying; ministers of the gospel would be saying, that with such sentiments at the helm, and with no one good man on the ground to look after the religious training of those boys, "their case is indeed sad."

This would be said, because experience has taught the Christian world that there is no instrumental influence so powerful for the formation of a good moral character as that which comes down on the heart and conscience from the *Scriptures,* everywhere teaching us that "The fear of the

Lord is a fountain of life." Well, let the fiction of New York become the facts of Massachusetts, and we return to our own institution.

As we return, we shall hear it said, "We have all a right to be here, one as much as another. This is a State institution, and you have no right to exclude any sect." Well, it is pertinent to ask, What kind of right is meant, when that claim is set up? Is it a legal right? But a legal right is one created by express statute. Now I have been so unfortunate as never to have met with any statute requiring the admission or the rejection of any party, and if there is no such express statute then there can be no legal claim about it. That vanishes. Well, is it a *moral* right that is intended? But what is a moral right? I turn to the great lexicographer and find this definition of the term "moral," viz: "Pertaining to practice or manners in reference to right and wrong." But a right thing is always a good thing, and, under the circumstances, always the best thing for reaching a good end. A wrong thing is injurious, and leads to an evil end, in some particular. For instance, the Trustees of this institution have an undoubted legal right to vote for a suspension of, or change in the Chaplaincy, at any time not covered by contract, without giving the incumbent one syllable of explanation, or softening down the surprise by previous conversation, or even coming to say the customary "Good bye" to the man who may have served them and the institution with conscious fidelity and with conscious success for more than eighteen months. The *moral* right, however, of the act itself, would turn on the question whether the suspension or change under consideration would be a good thing — and, under the circumstances, the best thing for these dear boys, in whose special interests the Chaplaincy exists. The morality of its *manner* would turn on the question whether it was carried into execution with as little injury as possible to the interests of, and did as little violence as possible to the feelings of the incumbent, setting him in a fair and true light before the churches.

The moral right of any man to an office in this institution turns on the question whether his presence here would, under the circumstances and on the whole, be the best thing for this band of youths, for whose special benefit the institution exists. It seems to follow then, with somewhat the force of a demonstration, that if a person cannot prove a legal right here, by virtue of special statute, and if it does not appear that his presence would be a benefit to the inmates, then what becomes of his moral right to be here, and what becomes of his claim to be here at all? especially so, since as, between man and man, we never hear of any right but that which may be comprehended either under the term moral or legal.

No man, therefore, may properly come here and set up a claim for his own admission, or that of the sect with which he is in affinity, till he can produce satisfactory evidence that his claim is based on some legal enactment, or a fair probability that his connection here will be a good thing for these youths. But, it is said, "The venerable *Donor* to this institution belonged to a particular sect, and therefore, of right, the management of its affairs belongs to that sect." Two or three thoughts only will be a sufficient answer to this plea. Even under this special plea, either a legal or moral fitness must be established, before the claim can stand good. In order, also, to establish this claim, it must be shown that the claimant does really and truly belong to that class of minds to which the Donor belonged; not that there are one or two items of agreement, but that the marks of agreement are such as fully and fairly to comprehend both minds in one and the same class. Another inquiry proper to be made is this: Did the Donor *design* this institution to be committed to the special care of his own sect? Well, it is a historic fact, that the Donor not only bequeathed in a princely manner for the endowment of this institution, but by his own approval and sanction of the instalment of evangelical men and influences here in the outset, he equally bequeathed the institution itself to the fostering care of evangelical Christians; his own son,

evidently understanding his designs, partaking of his large-hearted benevolence, for years officially sanctioning the father's undeniable, practical bequest. What, then, becomes of those arrogant claims, now so pertinaciously set up for wresting this institution from its proper, practical legatees ?

This special claim, therefore, is unfounded in every respect, and as it seems to us, impertinent, unless it can be shown that the Bible in its integrity, and in its evangelical interpretation, is not a good thing for these youths, or is unnecessary for their highest benefit.

We are here instituting no sectarian plea, but a plea in *opposition* to sectarian claims. We are putting in a plea for the retention of an unmutilated and unperverted Bible among these youths, as the most efficient and only proper basis of moral culture. It is a plea, in which not only all the evangelical Christians, but the thousands in the Commonwealth who sympathise with them, will unite, heart and hand; but not to build up denominational interests. No, no, a thousand times, no. It will be because they not only receive and believe the Bible, in its evangelical sense, for themselves, but because, in this sense, they know its peculiar, its unique, its emphatic, its undeniable, historic efficiency in the formation and re-formation of character.

It will be because they believe this reception and use of God's word is a *religious* duty, which we owe to God, to ourselves and to our children. And once more, they will unite in this plea, and that most earnestly, because they solemnly believe that the Bible's reception on the one hand, and its rejection on the other, is to affect the well-being of these youths here and forever!

Should it be said, as doubtless it will, "We have no idea of giving up the Bible here"; "the Bible is still to be taught here"; an experience of fifteen months, under the present influences, furnishes a cumulative answer, a hundred fold more forcible than can be transferred to paper.

In such an institution as this, where the entire round of

influences measurably depend on the taste and will of one man, and cannot fail to be modified by them, the best of influences can be made to drag heavily, while no one, perhaps, may be able to testify clearly, and convincingly in other circles, as to the real difficulty. General arrangements and the want of arrangements; taste or the manifest want of taste; general influence or the want of it; a word, the absence of a word, and the manner of it; permissions and inhibitions; manifest favor and unmanifest disfavor; requirements and non-requirements; insinuations of weakness attaching to certain beliefs and of superiority of intellect to others; a reminder of what "some men of distinction have believed or do believe, though others believe differently"; — all these things and more, an experience of fifteen months, has taught me as nothing but experience could, may be made so to tell against the real authority of the Bible, as to make it of little worth, as a volume of appeal, in a community like this. The truth is, the Bible may be here, may be here with an untorn leaf, an unmutilated page; may be taught in this Sabbath School, and measurably memorized by these youths, and still, to many young conceptions, stealthily poisoned, be no longer a volume of living and divine authority! and hence of little comparative worth as a basis of moral culture.

How is it possible for a person or persons here to teach, or encourage the teaching of the Bible in its strength and purity, in which resides all its real efficiency for reform, while at the same instant, harboring in their own hearts, a confessed and active dislike to the only expressed symbol of authority in the Ten Commandments? while claiming the right and the ability to criticise acknowledged Scripture itself? No, it cannot be done. Hence our objections, under present circumstances, to a miscellaneous supply of religious teachers here. This miscellaneous supply will be clothed with no authority, and will be defective on that account; it will give an uncertain sound, inducing a confusion of ideas on religious subjects, and in many minds, a consequent final disrelish for all

religion and religious teachers; it will not effectually reach and control the preparations for, and instructions in, the Sabbath School; it will not reach, and by a bodily presence, modify the reading department, or control the controlling influences of the institution during the week; and it will not, by a bodily presence, by a word here and a word there, be constantly and kindly reminding these dear boys, of the Sabbath and Sabbath-day instructions, of God, the soul, and eternity.

One thing more: Though there may be the utmost mutual kindness of feeling, yet such is the antagonism of religious sentiments now introduced here, that, in the nature of things, they can never coalesce, in themselves, nor be able to appeal to the same radical motives of reform, in the presence of these youths. You may bray these opposite religious sentiments in the great mortar of associated, official duties, from morn till night; you may throw them into this seething cauldron of nervous excitability, and put under them the fires of Vulcan; you may stimulate their affinities by the most powerful chemicals known in the laboratory of the human mind, and still, infidelity (which is a rejection of the divine authority of the Scriptures) and evangelical sentiments can never be made to affiliate. They can never blend. One or the other will be in the ascendancy. One or the other will be felt the more powerfully by this youthful band.

With a miscellaneous supply of Sabbath ministrations, under the present circumstances, the result can be of no doubtful issue as to which shall rise and which shall fall.

III. Thirdly, a resident Chaplaincy is the only rational alternative.

Many of the foregoing considerations will not fail to be regarded as most cogent reasons for such an appointment. Under the changed condition of things since my own entrance here, it may be difficult to find the man who, having a residence among the churches to lose, would be willing to throw himself, as a target, among so many marksmen on thirty

sides of him, with the big cannon booming in the distant rear, yet as "Distance lends enchantment to the view," doubtless he may be found. And whatever those "ten men in the State," whose good opinions alone are coveted in the matters of this institution, may think, the thousands of intelligent, evangelical Christians in the State will hardly be content, will hardly feel justified, will by no means be consistent with their religious faith, till they have done what they are able, for the restoration here of the Bible, the whole Bible, the Bible authentic and authoritative, as the basis of moral culture and moral reforms, shall be re-instated here, and thus honored by the weight of official influence in this institution. This supremacy of the Scriptures can be secured, under the circumstances, only through a resident chaplaincy. Do you say, other institutions of the kind have no such office? Some of them have not; some of them have. But is it not pertinent to inquire, what relations to the evangelical faith of the Scriptures they hold, who fill the highest offices in those institutions? Prudential reasons prevent a full consideration of this topic in the presence of a portion of my audience.

But I may ask, ask it in the unfeigned grief of my own heart, ask in the name of the thousands of Israel in the Commonwealth, to whose honest convictions of faith and conscience, not a little violence has been done by the introduction here of the sentiments quoted; I may ask, if there has not been a wide departure, and now, an unprecedented departure from the principles underlying the management and discipline of all the Reform Schools in the land? A parallel cannot probably be found. Three hundred youths and more, from year to year, sons of the Commonwealth, brought here by the strong arm of the law, and committed to the daily control and moulding influences of a mind that would have the enacting clauses stricken even from the divine law!! and this, by the votes of men professing evangelical sentiments, and therefore supposed to be able to appreciate the power of religious truth as an unequaled reformatory influence!! "O,

tell it not in Gath; publish it not in the streets of Askelon."

If we mistake not, a voice, loud and determined, comes up here to-day from the mass of intelligence and good sense in the Commonwealth; a united voice from the thousands of Israel, who stand upon the Holy Scriptures as the only basis of all good moral formations, and will never cease to demand a respected and honored evangelical resident chaplaincy here, until some faithful Abraham shall stand at the head of the institution.

In conclusion, we submit, that the character of the ministry proper to be exercised among these youths, can be safely judged of, and decided upon, on no principles but those confessedly set forth by example and precept in the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour.

As to the choice of an agent for this ministry in the future, I submit whether, under the present composition of the household, the question should not be mainly left to, or judged of, by the involuntary affection and confidence of these youths, and the previous known character and principles of the man who shall hereafter stand in the place vacated to-day.

My task is done; my loved labors closed; closed somewhat unexpectedly; and, to the feelings of one accustomed only to the more gentle and courteous walks of life, closed, as it seems, with unnecessary violence and official harshness; closed with no official previous hint as to what might possibly be thought expedient; closed with the implied censure always attaching to the dismissal of a minister of the gospel, when dismissed without official explanations, without testimonials, and without letters of introduction to other fields of labor; closed, so far as I have been able to learn, on the ground semi-

officially indicated, after two weeks waiting, by these words: "You are too serious in your preaching. You have not said anything, scarcely a word improper for you to say, but your preaching is too serious for these boys; that is the whole of it." And this, after having been twice elected to this office; after having twice positively declined a continuance; after having been twice over-persuaded by different members of the Board of Trustees to continue; the first time, under an *expressed* "expectation and probability of permanency;" the last time, by more than an hour's argumentation and appeal, thereby creating and continuing an expectation of permanency as real as though the appointment for the year had been indefinite.

The position was finally accepted, under the fullest conviction that, on my part, everything could be carried through, which a then six months trial had in any wise promised. And to-day I find some relief in the conviction that those promises have been more than fulfilled; I find some relief in the uplifted hands, on yesterday, and on the last Sabbath, of, I believe, the entire number of these dear boys of mine; and I find some relief in the universal respect said to be accorded to me by the household. The last six months of my labors here have been to me increasingly interesting, self-forgetting and satisfactory. My intercourse with the household has been marked by mutual courtesy. In but two instances, during the eighteen months of my official connection here, do I remember to have received words of disrespect from this whole number of boys, and those words were taken back almost immediately on the spot. Can this be said of any other officer on the ground?

Toward my youthful charge I have endeavored to make my demeanor that of gentleness, kindness, and a paternal, cheerful familiarity, always so carrying myself in their presence, and in their sports, in such a manner, that I could consistently enter the desk and preach to them as usual, at the next moment.

I am not aware, in all my *official* intercourse here, of having made one serious mistake, or uttered a word, which, if rightly interpreted, could justly be pronounced improper. Courtesy to all the officers, in their respective positions, has been the rule of my life here. My personal relations with both the former and the present Superintendents have been marred by no act, word, or syllable of a word, during all these trying months of the institution. Right or wrong, my heart did sympathise with the outgoing one, and admired all that I saw of the kind, gentle and quiet ease with which he commanded the respect and prompt obedience of his youthful charge.

To the incoming and present incumbent, my heart was ready to turn with that cheerful respect becoming his official position.

The Sabbath School Teachers from abroad have been my comfort and support; their faces have cheered on the great work; and by their labors of love and self-denial, I trust they are writing, living epistles to be known and read of all men, as evidences of the power of divine truth to reform the heart. With the Trustees, I feel but little acquainted; perhaps a better acquaintance would have been a different result.

But the hour has sped. The great clock in the dome of time has, for my official connection here, struck its "twelve," and your retiring Chaplain, though with no papers of commendation or introduction, as the worthy mechanic of the institution deservedly received at the close of his labors, yet I go, thankful in my heart for that emphatic declaration of the Superintendent to the Board of Trustees, just previous to the taking of that midnight vote, viz: "Gentlemen, I wish it to be distinctly understood, that if we are to have a resident Chaplain, I wish no change;" for this verbal testimony to my prudence, courtesy and fidelity, I return my public thanks.

And for those two hundred and seventy living epistles of commendation given me yesterday, and on the last Sabbath, in the uplifted hands of all the boys in the institution, I

thank *you*, boys, with a bursting heart, and will thank you as long as I live. I am glad I have been here: I am grieved to leave you. But 't is done. It only remains for me to bid my associates in office and labors; those beloved Sabbath School Teachers; my neighbors and friends; and these dear boys of mine, an affectionate FAREWELL.